

REMARKS

By the present preliminary amendment various ones of the originally filed claims have been amended to improve the readability thereof and/or to remove instances of multiple dependency. New claims have been added to even more fully characterize various features of the present invention. Certain claims have been cancelled without prejudice and/or the subject matter thereof incorporated into other independent claims.

Favorable consideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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ATTACHMENT FOR SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS
S rial N . 10/091,374

The following is a marked up version of each replacement paragraph and/or section of the specification in which underlines indicates insertions and brackets indicate deletions.

ABSTRACT

[The invention relates to a] A removable dust collection module (5) for use with vacuum cleaners as well as a vacuum cleaner incorporating such modules and [the] a method of detachably securing the dust collection module (5) to a vacuum cleaner housing. The dust collection module is slidably received within a vacuum cleaner housing and comprises a latch member (81) that can move from a first position, in which it engages with the housing [clamshell] of the vacuum cleaner (1) to retain the dust collection module within the vacuum cleaner, to a second position out of engagement with the vacuum cleaner to allow the dust collection module to be removed. The latch member is displaceable from its first to second position by activation of a slideable release member (7) which is actuated by an end user so as to lock or unlock the dust collection module.

ATTACHMENT FOR CLAIM AMENDMENTS
S rial No. 10/091,374

The following is a marked up version of each amended claim in which underlines indicate insertions and brackets indicate deletions.

1. (Amended) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

a housing;

a removable dust collection module carried by said housing;

[A] a locking mechanism for detachably securing said [a] removable dust collection module to said [a vacuum cleaner] housing, said latching mechanism comprising:

(i) a latch member that can move from a first position in which, in use, it can engage part of the vacuum cleaner housing to a second position in which, in use, it is free from the vacuum cleaner housing; and

(ii) a release member that is movable, in use, relative to the latch member, the movement causing the latch member to move from its said first position to said second position.

2. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to claim 1, wherein the latch member comprises [is] an elongate member.

3. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to claim 2, wherein the elongate latch member comprises a resilient biasing portion that provides a biasing force.

4. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to claim 3, wherein the latch member further [also] comprises two end housing engagement portions[.]; and

wherein the end housing-engagement portions are urged way from each other by biasing force of the resilient portion.

6. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to claim 3, [4 or 5] wherein the release member can be moved relative to the latch member to provide a force acting against the biasing force of the biasing portion of the latch member to thereby release the dust collection module from the housing.

7. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to [any of claims] claim 1, [to 6.] wherein the release member is moveable, in use, from a first release-member-position which it is in contact with the latch member, to a second release-member-position in which it is not in contact with the latch member; and

wherein the release member is movable relative to the latch member such that when the release member is in said first release-member-position where it is in contact with the latch member, then the latch member is in its second position in which it free from the said housing.

9. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to [any of claims] claim 1, [to 8,] wherein the release member is provided with at least one cam surface[.]; and

wherein the latch member is provided with a corresponding cam surface.

11. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to claim 9₁ [or 10] wherein the cam surfaces can slide over each other to effect [the] said movement of the latch member from its said first position to said second position.

12. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to [any of claims] claim 9, [to 11,] wherein the release member comprises two cam surfaces, and the latch member comprises two end, housing-engagement portions, each of which is provided with a cam surface shaped to correspond with respective ones of the cam surface on the release member.

13. (Amended) A [locking mechanism] vacuum cleaner according to [any of claims] claim 9, [to 12,] wherein said [the or each] one cam surface on the release member is provided with a bearing, and said [the or each] cam surface of the latch member is provided with a recess shaped to co-operate in a friction fit with [the corresponding] said bearing.

16. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to claim [15] 1, wherein the latch member of the locking mechanism is at least partly contained within the dust collection module.

17. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to claim 16, wherein [the] said restriction of movement of the latch member relative to the dust collection module is effected by at least one [or more] inwardly directed flange[s] that projects from an inwardly facing surface of the dust collection module.

20. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to claim 9, further [any of claims 15 to 19, also] comprising a backing plate positioned so as to locate the release member between itself and the dust collection module[.]; and
wherein the backing plate is positioned so as to provide a channel in which the release member can slide.

22. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to claim 20₁ [or 21,] wherein the backing plate is at least partly contained within the dust collection module[.]; and
wherein the latch member is contained within the dust collection module adjacent one surface thereof, and part of the backing plate is positioned substantially to prevent movement of the latch member further into the dust collection module.

24. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to [any of] claim[s] 22, [15 to 23,] wherein the latch member comprises [is] an elongate member, and the release member is contained within the dust collection module so that it can move relative thereto in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to [the] said [elongate] latch member.

25. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to [any of] claim[s] 1, [15 to 24,] wherein:

the dust collection module comprises an air inlet; [and]

the release member also acts as an air inlet closure member; and

movement of the release member relative to the latch member also moves the release member relative to the dust collection module and acts simultaneously to close a first air flow path into the dust collection module and open a second air flow path, that is remote from the first air flow path, into the dust collection module.

26. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to [any of claims 15 to] claim 25, wherein:

the dust collection module comprises two air inlets; [and]

the release member also acts as an air inlet closure shuttle member; and

whereby movement of the release member relative to the latch member causes the release member to slide relative to the dust collection module simultaneously to cover a first one of the air inlets of the dust collection module and open a second one of the air inlets of the dust collection module or vice versa.

27. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to [any of] claim[s] 1, [15 to 25,] wherein the dust collection module comprises two air inlets and the release member comprises [is] a shuttle member containing first and second openings; and

whereby movement of the release member relative to the latch member causes the release member to move relative to [the] said air inlets of the dust collection module so that in a first shuttle position the first, but not the second, air inlet of the dust collection module is in register with the first shuttle opening, and in a second shuttle position the second, but not the first, air inlet of the dust collection module is in register with the second [or another] shuttle opening.

28. (Amended) A [kit of parts] vacuum cleaner according to claim 27, wherein [the shuttle member comprises first and second openings and] the closure member can be moved relative to [the] said air inlets so that in a first shuttle position the first air inlet of the dust collection module is in register with the first shuttle opening but the second air inlet of the dust collection module is not in register with [any] either said shuttle opening, and in a second shuttle position the second air inlet of the dust collection module is in register with the second shuttle opening, but the first air inlet of the dust collection module is not in register with either said [any] shuttle opening.

Claims 14-15, 18-19, 21, 23, and 29-31 have been cancelled.

Claims 32-42 have been added.